

Amendments to the Claims

The following claim listing reflects the status of the claims pending in this application.

1. (***Currently amended***) Postero-lateral intervertebral disc prosthesis comprising an element mounted with an orientation and self-centering capability between a first insert and a second insert adapted to be disposed between vertebral plateaus of two successive vertebral bodies, wherein:

- [[-]] the first insert has a planar section to be fixed on a lower vertebral plateau;
- [[-]] the element has a lower planar surface for support, with a limited capacity for translational displacement on the first insert, and an upper surface with a generally hemispherical form;
- [[-]] the second insert has a planar section to be fixed on an upper vertebral plateau and has, opposite said planar section, a concave surface for cooperating with the hemispherical surface of the element, providing multi-directional articulation; and
- [[-]] the first and second inserts have a generally circular shape in the form of a disc with a diameter of less than about 30 mm and, when juxtaposed with the element between the first and second inserts, define a total height of about 11 to 15 mm to permit introduction of the prosthesis by a postero-lateral approach route.

2. (***Previously presented***) Prosthesis according to claim 1, wherein the element comprises a core of a generally hemispherical shape for cooperating with the concave surface of the second insert, said core having a central positioning stud extending from a bottom surface, and the first insert having a central recess for receiving the stud in order to permit axial rotation.

3. (*Previously presented*) Prosthesis according to claim 1, further comprising positioning fittings to provide a fixed connection between the first insert and the element.

4. (*Previously presented*) Prosthesis according to claim 1, further comprising positioning fittings to provide a mobile connection, with a capacity for limited translational displacement, between the first insert and the element.

5. (*Previously presented*) Prosthesis according to claim 3, wherein the positioning fittings for providing a fixed connection comprise complementary clipping means.

6. (*Previously presented*) Prosthesis according to claim 4, wherein the positioning fittings for providing a mobile connection comprise a pivot connection between the first insert and the element.

7. (*Previously presented*) Prosthesis according to claim 1, wherein each insert has, in its thickness, fittings to engage gripping and handling means.

8. (*Previously presented*) Prosthesis according to claim 1, wherein the element has, in its thickness, fittings to engage gripping and handling means.

9. (*Previously presented*) Autostatic retractor for fitting a prosthesis, in combination with the prosthesis of claim 1, wherein the retractor is shaped so as not to injure neurological elements.

10. (**Currently amended**) A method of deploying an intervertebral disc prosthesis[[,]] comprising: providing the prosthesis of claim 1; and introducing the prosthesis between two successive vertebral bodies by a postero-lateral approach route.

11. (**New**) Prosthesis according to claim 1, wherein the element comprises a generally round shape.

12. (**New**) Prosthesis according to claim 11, wherein the element comprises a generally circular shape.

13. (**New**) Prosthesis according to claim 1, wherein the first and second inserts have a generally circular shape to permit introduction of the prosthesis through a facet osteotomy by a postero-lateral approach route.

14. (**New**) Autostatic retractor in combination with the prosthesis recited in claim 9, wherein the retractor is adapted to separate a dural sac and roots so as not to injure the dural sac and roots.

15. (**New**) The method as recited in claim 10, wherein the method further comprises, prior to introducing the prosthesis, performing a facet osteotomy.

16. (**New**) The method as recited in claim 15, wherein facet osteotomy comprises a biplanar facet osteotomy.

17. (**New**) The method as recited in claim 15, wherein the method further comprises, after introducing the prosthesis, fixing the facet osteotomy.